

STATINTL

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Brezhnev Assures Kissinger on Ties

By Jack Anderson

Kremlin czar Leonid Brezhnev used tough language to impress upon Henry Kissinger in Moscow that Russia will continue to support North Vietnam.

But Brezhnev assured the President's peripatetic foreign policy adviser that the Vietnam war need not stand in the way of better Soviet-American relations.

The conversations continued, off and on, for four days. Sources privy to the secret details tell us Brezhnev was furious over U.S. suggestions that the Soviets had equipped Hanoi for an invasion of South Vietnam.

President Nixon himself served an oblique warning upon the Kremlin that "great powers cannot avoid the responsibility for the use of arms by those to whom they give them."

Brezhnev offered no apologies for furnishing Hanoi with the T-54 tanks, heavy artillery and other sophisticated weapons that have shown up on the fighting fronts. The North Vietnamese have used these heavy arms to spearhead their new offensive.

Brezhnev not only acknowledged that Soviet military shipments to Hanoi have been increased, but he made it

plain he would risk alienating the U.S. before abandoning North Vietnam.

He suggested that a Vietnam settlement can still be negotiated. However, there was no Soviet offer to soften Hanoi's terms. Brezhnev and Kissinger merely agreed that the two superpowers shouldn't let the Vietnam war disrupt their efforts to seek a Soviet-American detente.

Back at the White House, Kissinger apparently has persuaded the President not to let the Vietnam fighting jeopardize relations with the Russians. Nixon's first reaction after the new North Vietnamese offensive was to hit back. He said privately that he wasn't going to permit the U.S. to be pushed around.

But the original hard U.S. line, at least so far as Russia is concerned, has now been softened.

Answer to Thailand

The government of Thailand has accused us of "slandering accusations" for reporting how prominent Thais help to hustle heroin to U.S. markets.

Through its embassy in Washington, Thailand angrily charged that our recent column on the Thai drug trade was based "merely on hearsay."

In fact, our report was

based upon a thorough field investigation by American narcotics and intelligence agents. The Central Intelligence Agency has published five reports dealing wholly or in part with the Thai dope trade. These reports, classified "Confidential" and "Secret," substantiate our charges.

The Thais claim, for example, that they "began an intensive campaign against dangerous drugs more than ten years ago." They say the Bangkok government has taken "effective measures" against drugs. A program to get hill tribesmen to stop growing opium, they add, has "met with success."

These statements are flatly contradicted by the five CIA documents, dated from October, 1970 to October, 1971.

Far from showing progress in the last ten years, Thailand and its two neighbors, Burma and Laos, have "evolved in the past ten years from a major center for the growing and production of intermediate narcotics products to a major center for producing finished heroin."

As for the alleged success in preventing tribesmen from growing opium, the CIA states: "Government measures to curtail the growth of the opium poppy among the hill

tribes in . . . Thailand have been ineffective."

Thai law authorities, whom the government claims have cracked down on the drug traffic, are actually in cahoots with the smugglers.

Declares the CIA: "Officials of the RTA (Royal Thai Army), the BPP (Thai border police) and Customs at the several checkpoints on the route to Bangkok are usually bribed . . ."

There are, says the CIA, a multitude of civilian and military officials in Burma, Laos and Thailand "who take their cut to ensure safe passage of the opium . . ."

The CIA operatives, unlike the Thai authorities, have carefully pinpointed poppy fields, distribution points, processing centers and smuggling routes in Thailand.

Concludes the CIA: "Opium or morphine base is delivered to laboratories in Bangkok for further refinement into morphine or heroin . . . Most of the refined produce is then smuggled aboard Hong Kong-bound vessels—either Thai merchant ships at the Cho Phraya River docks in Bangkok or Thai deep sea trawlers.

"Such craft may then deposit the illicit cargo on one of the several hundred small islands ringing Hong Kong for later retrieval by a Hong Kong junk."

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